

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

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FOL REPEAT PARIS 30928 SENT ACTIONSECSTATE

INFO BONN BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DUBLIN THE HAGUE

LONDON LUXEMBOURG ROME TOKYO TEHRAN

EC BRUSSELS OECD PARIS DEC 24

QTE

IMITED OFFICIAL USE PARIS 30928

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, FR, EEC

SUBJECT: GOF AGREES TO WORK FOR PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN IRAN AND EC

1. BRUNET, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, MFA, CALLED
ECON/COM MIN DECEMBER 24 TO CALL HIS ATTENTION TO
PASSAGE IN COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF OFFICIAL VISIT TO
IRAN OF FRENCH PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC RELATING TO
ASSOCIATE STATUS FOR IRAN IN EC. THE PASSAGE, AS
REPORTED BY THE FRENCH PRESS, SAYS THAT FRANCE AND IRAN
WILL DEVELOP THEIR COOPERATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES AND
THAT FRANCE WILL "FULLY" SUPPORT THE CONCLUSION OF AN
AGREEMENT PERMITTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PREFERENTIAL
RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND THE EC.

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2. BRUNET SAID HE WAS CALLING OUR ATTENTION TO THIS PASSAGE BECAUSE HE WAS AWARE THAT WE HAD MADE REPRESENTATIONS A SHORT TIME AGO AGAINST A PROPOSAL TO PERMIT PREFERENTIAL ACCESS INTO THE EC OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS FROM IRAN. BRUNET SAID THAT THE PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE COMMUNIQUE WAS NOT THE AGREEMENT PERMITTING PREFERENTIAL ACCESS FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AGAINST WHICH WE HAD MADE REPRESENTATIONS, BUT RATHER AN AGREEMENT TO ACCORD COMPLETE ASSOCIATE MEMBER STATUS FOR IRAN SIMILAR TO THE STATUS BEING NEGOTIATED WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT THE DECISION TO SUPPORT ASSOCIATE STATUS FOR IRAN WAS A CHANGE IN FRENCH POLICY WHICH HAD BEEN ARRIVED AT AFTER VERY DIFFICULT DISCUSSIONS IN TEHRAN DURING THE CHIRAC VISIT.

3. ECON/COM MIN SAID THAT IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT ACCORDING ASSOCIATE STATUS TO IRAN WOULD GO BEYOND THE TERMS OF THE CASEY-SOAMES AGREEMENT WHEREBY THE EC AGREED TO LIMIT THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA TO BE COVERED BY PREFERENTIAL AGREEMENTS. BRUNET REPLIED THAT THIS HAD NOT OCCURRED TO HIM BEFORE, BUT THAT NOW THAT IT WAS CALLED TO HIS ATTENTION, HE WAS FORCED TO AGREE THAT ACCORDING ASSOCIATE STATUS TO IRAN WOULD PROBABLY, INDEED, BE A VIOLATION OF THE CASEY-SOAMES AGREEMENT. HE ADDED, SPEAKING ENTIRELY PERSONALLY, THAT HE HAD ALWAYS WONDERED WHY AND ON WHAT AUTHORITY SOAMES HAD ENTERED INTO SUCH AN AGREEMENT. WHEN DIRECTLY QUESTIONED BY ECON/COM MIN, HE SAID THAT IN SPITE OF THE CASEY-SOAMES AGREEMENT, FRANCE INTENDED TO ADHERE TO ITS COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT ASSOCIATE STATUS FOR IRAN. ECON/COM MIN SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THE GOF DECISION WOULD NOT BE WELL RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON.

4. COMMENT: WE WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT THAT THE GRANTING OF ASSOCIATE STATUS TO IRAN WOULD CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION OF THE CASEY-SOAMES AGREEMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IF WE ARE TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO FRANCE AND THE EC ON THIS QUESTION, WE SHOULD MOVE QUICKLY BEFORE POSITIONS HARDEN WITHIN THE GOF.

RUSH

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